

25th June 2021

### Stopping Child Exploitation

This months newsletter is to coincide with the weeklong law enforcement campaign, starting on ##th June 20201, to increase awareness of Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking, in particular focusing upon Child Exploitation.

Child exploitation takes many forms and this newsletter will cover just some of the main topics— Money Mules, County Lines & Child Sexual Exploitation.



### Money Mules

Criminals will sometimes try and launder money through the bank accounts of innocent people under a number of different guises. These victims of exploitation are usually vulnerable through either their age (school or college), through their mental health or through their alcohol or substance misuse.

The grooming can be done either in person, on-line or even through genuine looking job adverts. The victims are groomed through the lure of quick and easy cash but once they become Money Mules, it can be very hard to stop due to the criminals having all of their details and the threats of violence the criminals will use in order to ensure compliance.

### WHAT IS A MONEY MULE?



**1. STRANGER**

You talk to a stranger who is offering easy money for very little work

**2. BANK DETAILS**

They convince you to hand over your bank details or card

**3. MONEY TRANSFER**

Money is transferred into your account & you pass it on or withdraw it

**4. CUT OF THE CASH**

You get to keep a portion of the cash for yourself

**5. CRIMINAL OFFENCE**

**Congratulations!** You are now a money mule & have committed a criminal offence

#### When you're caught:

- ✗ Your bank account will be closed.
- ✗ You will find it hard to access further student loans.
- ✗ It will be difficult to get a phone contract.
- ✗ You will have problems applying for credit.
- ✗ You could go to prison for up to 14 years.



If you have any information about possible organised crime, victims of such crime or vulnerable people subject of exploitation, please inform Essex Police or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555111

Keep up to date and do **even more** Online at [essex.police.uk](http://essex.police.uk)



## County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe **gangs, groups or drug networks that supply drugs** from urban to suburban areas **across the country**, including market and coastal towns, **using dedicated mobile phone lines** known as 'deal lines'.

They exploit children and vulnerable adults to move the drugs and money to and from the urban area, and to store the drugs in local markets. They will often use intimidation, violence and weapons (including knives, corrosives and firearms).

The dealers (often still youths themselves) will frequently target children and vulnerable adults to act as drug runners or move cash so they can stay under the radar of law enforcement.

In some cases the dealers will take over a local property, normally belonging to a vulnerable person, and use it to operate their criminal activity from. This is known as **cuckooing**.

## The County Lines Grooming Process

1



Gangs prey on the vulnerable and entice children through the offer of friendship, protection and security.

2



This develops into the promise of reward, money &/or gift, if they do tasks for the gang in return.

3



After these tests of loyalty, victims may be forced into holding large amounts of drugs, money or weapons.

4



These exploited children may then be robbed, arrested and thus lose the items. They then get punished as a result.

5



Gangs isolate the exploited by making them mistrust their families, friends & the authorities. After a short time they believe only their gang members care.



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## Child Sexual Exploitation

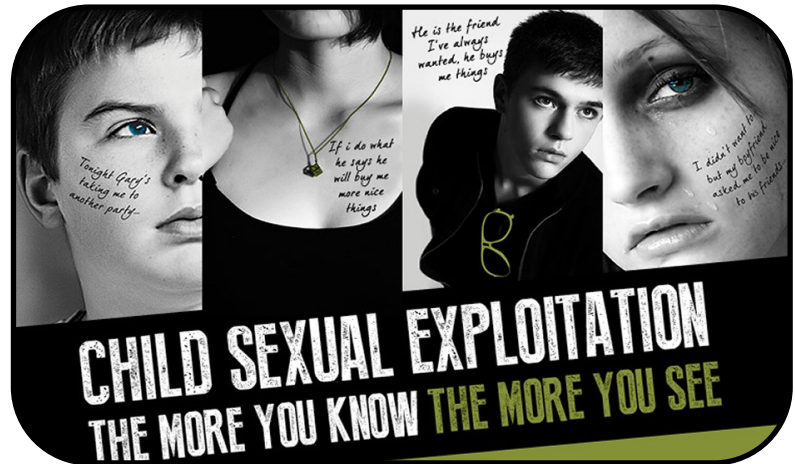
When a child or young person is exploited they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called **grooming**. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused. Children and young people can be **trafficked** into or within the UK to be sexually exploited.

They're moved around the country being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited. Abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse to control them.

## How to reporting

Should you have any concerns about child exploitation then please report via one of these ways:

- ◆ POLICE immediate threat to life - **999**
- ◆ To report a crime or for advice around any concerns you may have - **101** or online at [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk)
- ◆ The confidential **UK Modern Slavery Helpline** on **08000 121 700** or online at [www.unseen.org](http://www.unseen.org)
- ◆ **CrimeStoppers** on **0800 555 111** or submit information via their anonymous online form.



**Sexual exploitation is abuse.**  
If you think that you or friends are being abused it is important that you tell someone about it so that it can stop.

**When someone asks you to do things you don't want to do – it's not OK.**

- Starting to use drugs and/or alcohol
- Sudden mood changes
- Going missing from home or school
- Skipping lessons
- Criminal activity
- Suddenly having new things or money
- New, grown up 'friends'

**Possible indicators**



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